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ABSTRACT

Three case studies of interorganizational arrangements between public school districts and a college/university are used to illustrate how a state higher education agency (the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education) promoted voluntary, lateral relationships to strengthen local school educational programs. A within-case analysis documented project activities and outcomes, and described how and why each interorganizational arrangement operated as it did. The four major types of activities and services offered through each project were found to include: (1) direct services to students; (2) improvement of school practices through training for teachers; (3) publication of newsletters; and (4) consultation/technical assistance to service providers in the schools. These services were found to involve limited direct intervention in the schools, and their design minimized risk, exposure, or additional responsibility for college or district personnel. They were rarely coordinated to promote schoolwide change. The success of the projects was largely defined in terms of the number of students or teachers who enrolled in an activity and their satisfaction. Neither the process of collaboration nor more long-term outcomes related to the effectiveness of the projects in promoting school improvement were stressed by the Regents or the participating organizations. Includes 54 references. (JDD)

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Promoting Voluntary Interorganizational Arrangements: An Analysis of Three School-College Collaborative Projects in Massachusetts

Patricia S. Seppanen

RMC Research Corporation
Hampton, New Hampshire

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Executive Summary

Three case studies of interorganizational arrangements between a number of public school districts and a college or university were used to illustrate how a state higher education agency--the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education--defined and promoted voluntary, lateral relationships to strengthen educational programs at the local school level. An assumption was made that the same interorganizational phenomena would be evident in each case. Thus, a within-case analysis documented the stated project activities and outcomes that occurred between 1984-86, and described how and why each interorganizational arrangement operated as it did. A cross-case analysis was then completed in order to develop more general explanations of how and why the projects operated largely as cooperative arrangements.

The activities and services offered through each project were found to be illustrative of a service provider-client relationship between the campus and participating school districts. The four major types of activities included: (1) direct services to students, (2) improvement of school practices through training for teachers, (3) publication of newsletters, and (4) consultation/technical assistance to service providers in the schools. These activities and services were found to involve limited direct intervention in the schools and their design minimized risk, exposure, or additional responsibility for college or district personnel. They were rarely coordinated or consolidated to promote school-wide change or even district-wide impact.

The success of the projects was largely defined in terms of the number of students or teachers who enrolled in an activity or service, and their satisfaction with the experience. Data from the case studies demonstrated that neither the process of collaboration, nor more long-term outcomes related to the effectiveness of the projects

in promoting school improvement, were stressed by the Regents or by the participating organizations.

Finally, the arrangements that evolved between campuses and school districts could, at best, be characterized as cooperative, but non-egalitarian, with the higher education organizations serving in the dominant, focal role as the primary providers of services. Features of the relationships that contributed to their characterization as cooperative arrangements included: (1) the lack of interest and direction from the Board of Regents, (2) a heavy reliance on funding from the Regents that remained under the control of the campuses, (3) the voluntary nature of the relationships having to appeal to many constituencies, and (4) the choice of activities for students and teachers that could be supported by an informal network of school staff.

Introduction

The call for more and better cooperation between public schools and colleges or universities as a method of school improvement is not new. One of the earliest examples occurred in 1894 when the National Educator Association issued the *Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies* (cited in Sizer, 1964) calling for a higher level of school-college interaction in order to improve elementary and secondary school courses, programs, and articulation between secondary schools and institutions of higher education. College presidents, professors, and other teachers were urged to take an active interest in improving the schools in their respective localities, and to contribute to the discussion of all questions affecting the welfare of both the elementary and secondary schools.

In 1957, the launching of Sputnik by the Russians again spurred a call for academic reform in the American schools. A multimillion dollar effort was initiated by the federal government to upgrade mathematics and science courses, implement foreign language courses in the early grades, and promote widespread inservice teacher training programs. The National Merit Scholarship Program was launched and curriculum reform movements led by "distinguished university scholars" were aimed at upgrading school courses (The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973, p. 24).

More recently, a sense of urgency regarding the quality of education in the public schools has again resulted in recommendations for increased cooperation between schools and colleges (Boyer,1983; Hechinger, 1984; Maeroff, 1983; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The quality of public education is cited as a concern by colleges, due to a renewed interest in the general college curriculum, a continued need to allocate scarce fiscal resources to remedial courses, and the effects of declining

enrollments on their own futures (Boyer, 1983). School-college partnerships are cited as a way to improve teaching, curricula, administrative practice, and efficiency in the use of scarce physical, fiscal, and human resources.

A recent initiative by the Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education (the Regents) has resulted in the funding of a number of projects involving Massachusetts public schools and a variety of public institutions of higher education. The purpose of this research was to examine and analyze three discrete, but generally comparable, case studies of school-college collaborative projects that received major funding from the Regents between 1984-86. Through a cross-case analysis, more general explanations were developed regarding how and why these voluntary arrangements operated as they did.

A History of Weak Articulation

Education is usually depicted as a continuum of linkages from kindergarten through graduate school (Boyer, 1983; Maeroff, 1983; Thomson, 1984). Historically, the nature of the relationship between the sectors has been problematic, with public schools being connected, but separate, systems. Each sector has tended to be engaged with its own problems and has been somewhat out of phase with the other in making adjustments to changing enrollments during the past century (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973).

The more traditional relationships between schools and colleges have been summarized by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973) as follows: (1) the colleges receive their students from the schools; (2) the schools obtain their teachers, administrators, and textbooks from the colleges; (3) research flows from the colleges to the schools; (4) the curriculum in the schools affects the colleges, and the

college curriculum affects the schools; and (5) both the schools and the colleges are jointly influenced by the financial support, the politics, and the coordination mechanisms of the surrounding society.

Recent calls for educational reform are going beyond proposals to strengthen and smooth the more traditional relationships. High schools are being urged to offer "university in the school" programs and a variety of other arrangements to permit able students to accelerate their academic programs (Ambach, I982; Berman, 1985). Colleges and universities are being told by reformers that they should form comprehensive partnerships with one or more public schools (Boyer, 1983; Maeroff, 1983; United States Department of Education, 1984). Interorganizational cooperation is cited as a cost-efficient approach to dealing with the problems of declining enrollments, scarce financial resources, shifts in federal mandates, and weakening public confidence in education.

Publications that highlight successful school-college collaboratives or partnerships are starting to appear (Gorman, 1985; Maeroff, 1983; United States Department of Education, 1984). However, when summarizing the characteristics of effective collaboration, much attention is also given to the need to overcome perceived barriers to cooperation between the sectors (Boyer, 1983; Hurwitz, 1974; Hymel, 1980, Intriligator, 1982; Maeroff, 1983; Schaffer, 1983). Recommendations for effective collaboration have included the need to:

- establish an agreement to cooperate on a common set of interests or goals;
- overcome the traditional hierarchy between teachers, administrators, and college personnel;
- focus the cooperative effort on a few specific goals;
- give recognition to participants and offer professional rewards such as money;
- focus on action or learning outcomes, not the machinery of bureaucracy.

The terms *collaboration* and *partnership* are used synonymously in the educational literature to characterize voluntary interorganizational relationships between schools and colleges to improve school practice. Any definition of these terms tends to imply a mutuality of interest, some level of equal status, and jointly initiated interactions (Rappa, 1983). In practice, however, the attractive ideals of collaboration may not necessarily translate into action among participants (Hord, 1986). Smith found, in his review of the literature regarding the connection between colleges and schools, that an unmistakable imbalance has persisted. "Colleges clearly [have] dominated both the process of initiation and any ensuing interaction with the schools" (Smith, 1986, p. 17).

Much of the educational literature regarding school-college collaboration may, in part, reflect the hopes or preferences of reformers rather than the operative connections between organizational segments. Looking back on relations between the educational sectors, Sizer (1964) noted that the recommendations of the Committee of Ten in 1864 "represented a high water mark of college and university cooperation with the lower schools" (p. 130). Since that time, ongoing voluntary cooperation between the educational sectors at the institutional level has continued to be cited in the literature as being necessary and valuable. At the same time, it has been found to endure only in isolated cases or unusual circumstances (Hagberg, 1977; Schaffer, 1983).

The fact remains, however, that public school and higher educational personnel are again being told by reformers to form partnerships to improve educational practice. Staff from state departments of education and higher education agencies are being asked to facilitate interorganizational arrangements. Hord (1986), in her synthesis of the research on interorganizational collaboration in education, concluded there has been

little systematic study of the complex aspects of collaboration. A great deal of additional inquiry, elaboration, and refinement is necessary to clarify the expectations of participants, the commitments of each sector, and the processes that bring about voluntary interorganizational arrangements that are perceived as successful by both schools and colleges.

Defining Interorganizational Relations

What exactly is an *interorganizational relationship*? Van De Ven (1976) defines an interorganizational relationship (IR) as occurring:

> When two or more organizations transact resources among each other....An IR is defined as a social action system on the premise that it exhibits the basic elements of any organized form of collective behavior: (1) Behavior among members is aimed at attaining collective and self-interest goals; (2) Interdependent processes emerge through division of tasks and functions among members; (3) An IR can act as a unit and has a unique identity separate from its members. (p. 25)

White (cited in Mulford & Rogers, 1982) concluded in his review of the literature that most organizational specialists seem to converge on decision making as the central or fundamental aspect of interorganizational relations. "Decision making with regard to the control and allocation of resources in an interorganizational environment is a dimension common to all the research approaches" (p. 12).

Two processes discussed in relation to interorganizational relations include *coordination* and *cooperation*. One of the more complete definitions of *coordination* has been proposed by Mulford and Rogers (1982), who defined it as "the process whereby two or more organizations create and/or use existing decision rules that have been established to deal collectively with their shared task environment" (p. 12). This definition is particularly illuminating because it: (1) emphasizes that decision rules

exist, but can be created by participants or created by a third party; (2) defines the relationship in terms of a shared task environment; (3) focuses on the attainment of joint goals, rather than individual organizational goals; and (4) stresses joint decisions and action. The definition is broad enough to recognize that coordination can be for a range of activities such as program planning, action, or joint evaluation of action. Its broadness also permits the recognition that powerful organizations can have relatively more influence on decision rules and that coalitions among organizations may form and change.

In contrast, interorganizational *cooperation* is usually conceptualized as the more ad hoc, less formalized agreements between organizations (Whetten, 1981). Schermerhorn (1975), in his integration of the literature regarding cooperation, concluded that it should be distinguished from coordination based on the outcomes produced. He defined cooperation as the deliberate relations between otherwise autonomous organizations for the accomplishment of individual, rather than joint, operating goals.

Overview of the Initiative by the Regents

The school-college collaborative initiative by the Massachusetts Board of Regents was undertaken in the spring of 1984 at the direction of the governor's Office of Educational Affairs. Staff from the Board of Regents were responsible for the development of a request for proposals (RFP). The RFP included the definition of program categories, directions for preparation of a proposal narrative, and proposal review criteria. The overall intent of the initiative has been to improve the quality of education in the public schools in Massachusetts.

Initially, each of the 29 public college and university campuses in Massachusetts

was given the opportunity to submit up to three, one year, renewable proposals that were to be developed in cooperation with area school districts. Projects totaling $3.85 million were approved as part of the fiscal year (FY) 1985 operating budget, with funds being allocated to the campuses from a separate reserve account. In FY 1986, the whole initiative was essentially level funded at $3.85 million, with carry-over funds bringing the total to $4.1 million. The FY 1987 request was projected at a total of $4.1 million as well.

Project funding patterns for the first two years, and the recommendations for FY 1987, were very consistent. The 61 to 71 projects recommended for funding each year ranged in size from a few thousand dollars to approximately $200 thousand. Each year, 75 percent of the projects received less than $80 thousand through the Regents. Within this group of projects, 34 to 45 percent received less than $40 thousand. A majority of the proposals continued to be requests for support of activities initiated in FY 1985 or, in a few cases, activities that were initiated in prior years with other sources of funds.

As an attempt at establishing voluntary interorganizational arrangements between public schools and institutions of higher education for the purpose of improving education in the public schools, many contextual factors make the school-college collaborative initiative by the Massachusetts Board of Regents of interest. These included: the origin of the initiative in a directive by the governor to the Board of Regents; the voluntary nature of the arrangements and the apparent absence of elaborate directives or structures to shape the interactions; the provision of financial resources to participating organizations through the Regents; the number and variety of organizations choosing to get involved in project activities; and the variety of activities that could be initiated.

Study Design

Three discrete, but generally comparable, case studies were used as a means of examining the problems and possibilities which exist when a state higher education agency attempts to define and promote voluntary, lateral relationships between public school districts and a college or university in order to strengthen educational programs at the local school level.

A number of assumptions and criteria were used in the selection of case study sites that would permit the full exploration of how and why voluntary arrangements operated as they did. First, the projects that were selected had to provide services to local school districts. An assumption was made that if services were actually being provided, at least some exchange of resources was occurring between the participating organizations. Second, each of the sites selected would represent the involvement of a different segment of higher education (e.g., a community college, state college, and a university). A common assumption is that community colleges or campuses with teacher education programs are more closely articulated with the public schools than the more research oriented universities. Third, the projects were selected to represent well-developed cases of interorganizational arrangements that were designed to improve the quality of education in the Massachusetts public schools. The projects selected for study had to be perceived as successful by the Regents, participating school districts, and the host college or university. (For a detailed description of the selection criteria, how the case study sites were selected, and what data were collected, see Appendix A.)

A case study approach for examining interorganizational relations between a college or university and a group of school districts was considered appropriate for a number of reasons. First, researchers (Benson,1982; Meyer and Scott, 1983) have stated that

the context within which services are implemented through an interorganizational relationship must be considered in any analysis. The use of case studies allowed for a full exploration of the contextual factors. Second, the study of interorganizational relations in education as complex organizational processes must consider multiple sources of evidence to establish specific facts about the arrangements (Yin and Gwaltney, 1981). Any subdivision of the processes into components would be premature at this time. As Yin (l981) states, "As a research strategy, the distinguishing characteristic of the case study is that it attempts to examine: (a) a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 59).

Finally, the use of three case studies, rather than a single case study, was considered appropriate because the same interorganizational phenomenon was thought to exist in a wide array of situations. A multiple-site study on the same topic is intended to form the basis for generalizing to a broader array of situations (Louis, 1982; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Yin & Gwaltney, 1981). Evidence of events and processes across multiple settings help to assure they are not wholly idiosyncratic, while permitting an analysis of how such processes are bent by specific local contextual variations.

Research Questions

Major questions raised by the school-college collaborative initiative include: How do voluntary relationships between a number of public schools and a college or university unfold and what are the outcomes produced? How do participants define the success of the arrangements? What are the traits, activities, and behaviors of participants that characterize these relationships? What contextual factors and organizational conditions tend to inhibit or promote the development and maintenance of these relationships?

Major Findings

In large measure, the three projects did not achieve the ideals of collaboration that have been recently touted in publications by educational reformers, and that were specifically articulated in the RFP guidelines issued by the Regents each year. Nevertheless, many services and activities were delivered, and when viewed from the perspective of the individual participants, the campuses, and the local schools, the efforts were considered successful.

It must be remembered that the relationships were intended as voluntary *collaborative* initiatives from the state agency to the local project levels. In reality, the arrangements that evolved could, at best, be characterized as *cooperative*, but non-egalitarian, with the higher education organizations serving in the dominant, focal role as the sole providers of services. The projects were designed to engage participants in a series of campus- or district-based activities so as to: (1) secure additional resources directed toward activities for the schools, (2) satisfy the Regents and participant organizations in terms of providing services for students or teachers, and (3) demonstrate a campus' service to the surrounding community and possibly serve as a recruitment tool.

At the same time, the project activities involved limited direct intervention in the schools, and minimized risk, exposure, or additional responsibilities for college or district personnel. Linkages between the college or university and the participating school districts were not formalized, and did not alter the relationships between the organizations at the state or local levels. A general lack of joint decision making resulted in little loss of power or autonomy by participating organizations. Project activities varied, but were administered by marginal subunits that were quite

autonomous from the core activities of the host college or universities. Activities were rarely coordinated or consolidated to promote school-wide change or even district-wide impact.

While the projects had many unique features, the three case study sites all faced some common design and management issues as well. This section synthesizes the lessons that cut across all the cases and is guided by two objectives. The first objective is to summarize the experiences of the case study sites as voluntary interorganizational arrangements, with particular emphasis given to describing the outcomes that were achieved and how the projects were defined as successful by participating organizations. A second objective is to highlight the implications of the experiences of the projects as they relate to the design of voluntary interorganizational arrangements between colleges or universities and public schools.

The remainder of this section is divided into three parts. First, the outcomes that were achieved across sites and the measures used to define them as successful will be described. The second part highlights the design, contextual, and management factors that affected the project outcomes across the sites. The last part discusses the broader design and management issues related to fostering voluntary arrangements between a college or university and a number of school districts.

Outcomes Achieved

There are a number of criteria that may be used for assessing the outcomes of an interorganizational arrangement. One may look at the perceived effectiveness of the interorganizational process, including whether a structural arrangement is established and the actual flow of resources or activities between participating organizations.

Related to these more short-term measures, one may also consider the extent to which organizations carry out commitments and believe the relationships are worthwhile, equitable, productive, and satisfying.

Additionally, the effectiveness of an interorganizational arrangement for the delivery of services may be assessed by two additional kinds of goal-related outcomes. First, it may be asked whether the services and activities were of high quality. Second, the adequacy of the arrangement may be judged in terms of its long-range effectiveness in promoting desired school improvement efforts as measured by outcomes for teachers and students.

In these three cases, neither the process of collaboration, nor the more long-term, goal-related, outcomes were emphasized by the participating organizations. The success of activities was largely defined by the campuses, school districts, and Board of Regents as the number of students or teachers who enrolled in an activity and their relative satisfaction with the experience.

Each of the projects achieved at least modest success in delivering activities that were not readily available in the public schools and that were perceived as unique and positive by the participants. However, the interorganizational arrangements achieved their appeal to participating organizations to the degree that these more *formal* benefits could be realized without significant expenditures of money or reassignment of staff, without scheduling problems, without loss of organizational autonomy, and without the need for elaborate administrative support. These more *informal* benefits are all dimensions of a cooperative relationship, and the projects achieved their appeal to the degree the *status quo* on these dimensions was not affected.

An examination of the four major types of services and activities studied as part

of the cases--direct services to students, improvement of practice through training for teachers, publication of newsletters, and consultation/technical assistance to district coordinators--illustrates the service provider-client relationship that developed between the campuses and school districts. Beyond measures of success based on the amount of services or activities provided, and the numbers of students or teachers served, a number of other ancillary positive outcomes for participants were noted and will also be discussed below.

Direct Services to Students

The primary focus of the projects located at the Local Community College (LCC) and Small State College (SSC) was enrichment activities for gifted and talented students that were scheduled to occur outside of a student's regular school day. There was no attempt at either project to coordinate offerings with the public school curriculum and no evidence the activities were intended to augment or replace established school activities.

The underlying ideology of providing special activities for talented and gifted students was based on the belief that, (a) these students are a "neglected" group in the public schools, (b) they needed the chance to interact socially with other bright students, and (c) they needed specially designed activities not available in the public schools in order to develop their potentials. The activities took several forms based on the overall program model, including:

- small group workshops lasting two to six sessions for students in grades K through 12 were offered at the LCC campus throughout the year. They were designed to encourage a deeper interest in a specific field or area of study. Workshop topics included the arts, science, and humanities;

- a combination of a weekly large group presentation on a substantive topic or skill by a guest speaker, followed by small group discussions and five week mini-courses in special topics were offered at the SSC for campus for 10th and 11th graders. The program was designed to

encourage the analysis, integration, and evaluation of conflicting information and concepts rather than the development of a particular skill or advanced work in a specialized area;

- chamber music ensembles (at LCC) and a youth orchestra (at SSC) that rehearsed each week at the campus with scheduled performances periodically;

- mentoring relationships were arranged for participants at the SSC site that allowed students to meet with professionals working in areas of interest to them.

Linkages between the campuses and the schools. The primary linkage between the host campus and participating schools for the direct provision of services to students was through the campus-based project director and school contact people who retained primary responsibility for the recruitment and selection of students. School staff members assumed the responsibility for selecting students to participate for two reasons. First, controversy over the criteria used for identifying talented, gifted, or high potential students could be avoided. At both SSC and LCC, project staff very rarely rejected a nominee from a school. Second, the perceived success of the activities depended upon students' becoming aware of the activities and choosing to participate. The use of school contact people was an efficient way of reaching the students.

There was an assumption that school staff involved with the projects at SSC and LCC could, and would, select students for participation who were considered gifted and talented. The SSC procedures had evolved out of the initial model of services developed prior to funding being available through the Regents. These procedures were more formalized and structured than those used by school staff involved with the LCC effort. To varying degrees, the broad definitions of who is gifted and talented used at each site were skewed as they were filtered through the program structures and processes used by district staff in the selection and referral of students. Locating the activities at the campuses resulted in a "natural selection" based on the student's access to

transportation, competing extracurricular activities or jobs, length of travel time required, or the willingness to pay the tuition in some instances at SSC. Staff in the schools evolved their own processes for selecting students that varied widely from school to school. Some used their existing structures for sorting students, and made information about the program available only to those students in the honors, advanced, or college preparatory courses. Others only considered students achieving a certain class rank. A few staff gave the information to students whom they felt would benefit from the program or whose parents would be willing to assume responsibility for transportation.

Project directors at both sites supported a broad definition of gifted and talented and talked of including, rather than excluding, interested students. Their attitude was that the activities were probably good for all interested students. Thus, there was little or no objection to the process of natural selection or filtering of students through the existing structure of the schools. The students who participated and their parents felt honored for being "selected" as gifted or talented. The projects looked successful given their good overall participation rates. For the most part, school staff felt they had helped students have experiences not otherwise available to them. In the few instances where reluctant district staff felt pressured by parents to refer students to the LCC project, it was just easier to "go along" rather than oppose the referral because students participated at no cost to the district.

Campus accessibility as a project strength. Although the maintenance of adequate enrollments was used as the primary measure of success of the direct services to students, other criteria were used to justify the decision about where services were to be provided. The use of the campuses as the sites for special workshops and courses for

students was perceived as a very positive feature of each program by project directors and many school district staff. The campuses were able to be perceived symbolically as being a responsive home for activities which benefited the community, while providing access to their facilities during time periods that caused minimum disruption to ongoing activities. Further, the introduction of campus facilities to students and their parents was described at each project as also serving as a recruiting tool for the institution. At the same time, the districts were afforded an opportunity to select students to participate in special activities described as not being available at the schools. The activities occurred at a minimum cost to the district and without disruption of ongoing school programs.

At both LCC and SSC, the centralization of activities was deemed necessary to meeting the specialized needs of the gifted and talented in a more *effective* and *efficient* way than could be provided individually by school districts. At LCC, the school staff who had an interest in satellite sites throughout the county met rarely as a group so their collective voice was never heard. The project director felt overwhelmed under the current centralized model and could not conceptualize how she could adequately manage a decentralized one. At SSC, the program had become well established as a model that *appropriately* used the university facilities. Having access to the university library was stressed by many school staff as a "wonderful opportunity" for student participants. School superintendents or their designees were not willing to base the activities for their students totally at area high schools, even when participation did not reach the desired levels in one group of districts located over one hour away from the SSC campus. Use of a campus by high school students retained a certain mystique for school

staff involved in planning the program, and gifted students were perceived as needing a chance to be in a special setting with their peers.

However, at SSC it was this emphasis on centralized services (as well as the lack of overall enthusiasm for the project) that resulted in its inability to expand to include districts located over 70 miles away. Keeping the newer program components at the SSC campus largely insured continued low enrollments and allowed them to "die comfortably" without a lot of effort being expended by the school superintendents or staff from this particular group of districts. The failure of student participants and group leaders from these schools to give initial rave reviews to the project, and to express discontent with the organization of the effort, also contributed to a sense that the activities might not be worth the effort to save them.

Improvement of School Practices

A second major type of activity offered through the projects focused on training for teachers. Short-term inservice sessions, curriculum development workshops, semester-long courses, summer institutes, and demonstration lessons were the main types of activities used at the Large State University (LSU) site and to a lesser extent the SSC site, to improve the practice of teaching a particular subject area or student group. Initially, the project staff at LCC attempted to offer inservice sessions. However, they ended up being dropped due to low enrollment of teachers. Detailed reasons for the failure of inservice activities to thrive at LCC will be enumerated later.

Specific ongoing activities designed to help teachers improve classroom practices tended to quickly become routinized and formed the basis of standard offerings to school district personnel. The activities were judged successful based on the number of school staff who registered and favorable comments from written evaluation forms filled out by

those who completed the series. Many of the activity formats had been developed prior to the projects receiving funding by the Regents. Under Regents' funding, the following types of activities continued:

- four-week summer institutes offered annually at the LSU campus. Teachers from the greater Boston area applied for admission to the institute and received a stipend and graduate credit if they matriculated;

- thirteen-week courses offered during the school year at the LSU campus. Teachers from targeted school districts that were part of the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) applied and were selected for participation by project staff. Participants received a stipend and graduate credit if they matriculated. A small number of teachers who completed this course were invited back for an advanced summer institute held on-campus;

- eight to 13 session inservice workshops offered off-site at a school building by project staff at LSU and former participants called teacher- consultants. Participants were selected by the schools, with priority for admission being given to former summer institute participants;

- one-day sessions held on a Saturday at the LSU campus for former participants to share curricula developed and piloted in their own classrooms. The audience included past and present participants;

- short-term seminars (usually one to five sessions) offered at SSC and area high schools for teachers in current issues related to a specific academic area (e.g., teaching social science, creative thinking, the learning disabled gifted and talented student). Presentations were made by SSC faculty and "experts" from other universities;

- single-session workshops offered by SSC project staff upon request at area school districts. Activities included demonstration lessons with students, teacher inservice in specific topics, round-table discussions regarding program implementation and curriculum development for gifted and talented students;

- two to four day training sessions offered twice a year at the SSC campus for school staff who were new or returning group leaders. Participants received a stipend for completing the activity;

- development of a small curriculum library at the LSU campus for use by teacher participants.

Knowledge flow. The flow of knowledge at each project concerned with the improvement of school practice was definitely from project staff at the university or college to the school staff. In addition, the LSU site, and to a lesser extent the SSC site, based their activities on ideologies of nationally known university-affiliated leaders or groups. The LSU project was part of the National Writing Project (NWP) and incorporated their approaches for teaching writing and training teachers to teach writing. The project staff at LSU was able to combine the NWP approaches with their own teaching experiences in urban school settings to enhance credibility with teacher participants. The SSC project relied heavily on a conceptual model of services for talented and gifted developed by Professor Joseph Renzulli at the University of Connecticut. A project staff person was a former graduate student of Renzulli's and used both his past teaching experiences and the model as the basis for developing inservice workshops and classroom demonstrations. Thus, these projects had an ideological identity that was regionally or nationally known and growing in acceptance with interested school staff. The use of former teachers as inservice presenters enhanced the credibility of the information with school teachers because the information was being presented by "one of their own--people who knew life in their type of classroom." The presenter's affiliation with the university-based projects symbolized a recognition of the worth of classroom practice.

Although the flow of knowledge was from the university to the schools, it was not dependent upon the participation of faculty. College or university faculty considered any involvement as instructors or inservice presenters as outside of their regular jobs and the few who became involved were paid for their participation with project or grant funds. Further, there was no evidence that the reward structure for college or

university faculty reinforced their participation in activities directed toward the schools beyond offering a guest lecture for a small stipend. The lack of ongoing involvement of faculty was not a major issue for project directors, who were more interested in finding dynamic individuals who could offer instruction using a particular approach or in a certain content area--and appeal to participants.

Linkages between campuses and the schools. Although the content and duration of the activities for improving school practice varied across sites, the methods used to involve participants were very similar at the SSC and LSU sites. Teachers were actively recruited for activities that were held on-campus, and they had to complete some type of application process to be accepted. Letters announcing the activity and brochures typically were sent to school superintendents, principals, appropriate coordinators, and former participants for dissemination to teachers. Because many of the activities carried a stipend, school policies usually required that the announcement be advertised using certain procedures to assure equal opportunity for participation. Registrations at SSC tended to be accepted on a "first come--first served" basis. At LSU, participants were selected by project staff based on the quality of their application and an effort to include teachers from a range of school systems, grade levels, and subject areas.

Activities that were scheduled to occur at a particular school building were arranged because a school principal, department chair, or coordinator contacted the project director and requested the activity. Project staff at LSU had learned from past experience to schedule a planning session with school officials and to request that at least one teacher be involved to assure that there was interest and that staff were receptive to the activity. Project staff at both SSC and LSU tended to tailor their standard repertoires to a particular grade level and the amount of time allocated to the activity.

The repertoire of activities could remain fairly standard from district to district or building to building since it was usually the first contact most teachers had with project staff.

Ancillary benefits of campus-based activities. One of the most striking positive outcomes of the on-campus inservice activities for the improvement of school practice was the strong sense of fraternity (or really sorority) that was fostered and developed between participants who were from different schools and backgrounds. Many teachers mentioned they were one of a few from their building who were involved with the project. These teachers appeared to be committed to the particular ideology advocated by the project staff. At LSU the instructional process fostered self-disclosure that led to a high degree of personal bonding between participants as they shared writing exercises that were based on personal experiences. A core of group leaders from the original project at SSC, in contrast to the newer group leaders, remained very active and committed to the project. The new group leaders were those involved in student activities that floundered and who indicated they could not share the sense of success felt by the older group leaders.

Holding inservice or institute activities on campus was a critical part of the sense of closeness and mutual support that developed between teachers. Teachers involved in the LSU project, especially from the Boston Public Schools, looked to the project for stability and a sense of professionalism that they did not have within the district. These teachers had a strong sense of teaching as a profession and wanted curricular approaches they could develop and use in their own classrooms. Curricular objectives and materials imposed by the school administration were something to be coped with, rather than valued. Former participants, tapped to become inservice presenters, had a common

history with newer participants that helped them serve as role models as they imparted information. Group leaders at SSC offered a similar version of this theme as they described the teaching approaches they used with student participants that could not be used in their own high schools with all students. Participation in the SSC project allowed them to establish a more informal relationship with students and to engage them in discussions that fostered critical thinking.

Project Newsletters

The LSU and SSC sites used periodic newsletters to maintain contact with current or former participants, as well as school district superintendents, principals, and coordinators. The content of the newsletters provided information regarding "what was going on" in terms of project activities and provided the opportunity for student or teacher participants to contribute short articles. The function of these newsletters was to enhance the bonding between participants and the project, demonstrate to school staff, whose support was important, that valued activities were taking place, and enhance the visibility of the project with school staff who were responsible for referring participants or hosting inservice activities. At LCC, a newsletter was not produced. However, the graphically attractive program brochure and application, published quarterly and widely disseminated to school staff and former participants, was designed to serve much the same function.

Evidence that the dissemination of written information functioned as intended could not be confirmed with school personnel. To some, the brochure personified the relationship and served as evidence that the project existed. Although the newsletters or brochures appeared to be the one vehicle for tying the network together and giving it

definition to others, the formats tended to reinforce the notion that it was a campus-based project providing services to school districts.

Technical Assistance

Project staff at LSU and LCC provided technical assistance to principals, coordinators, or teachers on a very limited, building by building basis. The affiliation of the staff with a campus-based project enhanced a perception of expertise that a district-based coordinator could draw upon to influence changes within the district. Technical assistance provided through the LSU project was undertaken by project staff in order to enhance the capability of the school district staff to improve the teaching of writing. Activities included providing assistance in the development of procedures to assess and rate student writing at specific grade levels. In one district, staff worked along with school teachers to score student writing each year. At LCC, technical assistance activities were offered in lieu of teacher inservice activities that were initially not well attended. As the project became known in the region, the project director was approached by school staff to discuss the identification of talented and gifted children or, in a few instances, the development of school-based activities.

There are a number of factors inherent in the design and management of the interorganizational arrangements that appear to account for the patterns of perceived success noted in the previous discussion of outcomes achieved by the projects. These factors, and the issues they illuminate, are discussed in the following sections.

Factors Affecting Project Activities and Outcomes

The perceived success of activities was largely defined in terms of participation rates and participant satisfaction. Activities could gain an adequate enrollment, but

experience wide differences in participation rates between sending or host districts, and still be considered successful. However, an activity could be rated as satisfactory by participants, but fail to either draw enough participants or a wide enough distribution of participants across districts and be canceled, or subsequently dropped as not successful. In looking at patterns in project design, context, and management, three factors appeared to contribute most to the success of project activities: the interest and commitment of district-based staff, the relative value of the activities and incentives to participate, and the experience and commitment of the project director.

The Interest and Commitment of District-based Staff

School staff became involved in activities in various ways that contributed to the overall success of an activity. The roles played by staff may be characterized as examples of Outreach, active cooperation, and finally as "small-scale" examples of collaboration in which school staff actively assumed a role in activities sponsored under the auspices of the campus-based project. Each of these types of roles will be described and addressed in turn below.

Outreach. A role performed particularly by district-based coordinators or school principals was that of *district host.* Inservice and technical assistance activities provided by the LSU project, and to a lesser degree by the SSC project, depended upon a school-based staff person who had the authority to invite project staff as providers of service. At the point in time when the LSU project received funding from the Regents, district hosts who were familiar with the project were seeking out project staff to request inservice presentations and technical assistance. On the other hand, at SSC, project staff sometimes initiated contact with potential district hosts to indicate a willingness to provide service and to find out if they were interested in scheduling an

inservice activity with school staff. This approach was adopted also by the project director at LCC after the initial attempts to draw teachers to activities scheduled at the campus failed.

The success facilitators and hosts had in marshalling participants from within their own organizations proved to be a vital element in the perceived success of the projects as a school-college collaborative effort. The roles of facilitators or hosts were important in various ways: (a) they could use their authority to promote inservice activities for teachers or in the recruitment of students and therefore take the burden of having to sell the program off of the project staff, (b) participation rates generated by their promotional efforts were used to demonstrate the value of the project to both the participating organizations and the Regents, and (c) the existence of these roles could be used as evidence of joint planning and implementation of the project in the Regents' proposal.

Active cooperation. School staff, including teachers, guidance counselors, principals, and coordinators served as *facilitators* of project activities because of their control over access to students or other school staff. In two of the projects (SSC and LCC), school districts were asked to designate liaison or contact people who would be responsible for the identification and referral of gifted and talented students for participation in activities scheduled at the campus. In most cases, districts with relatively high participation rates had a liaison or contact person who described him or herself as a strong supporter for the project, and who willingly assumed this role in addition to regular duties within the district. Districts with particularly low participation rates typically did not have a staff person who had assumed this role, or had one who had been assigned the role and was not particularly supportive of the

project design or ideology guiding the activities. In a few cases, staff serving as facilitators indicated they supported the project, but cited other barriers including competing activities, lack of perceived value of the experience by students, distance from the college or university, or tuition fees not subsidized by the district (in the case of the SSC project) as the reasons their recruitment efforts were unsuccessful.

Small-scale collaboration. Instructors and group leaders for activities offered under the auspices of the three projects were largely drawn from public school teachers, professionals in the community, and project staff funded through the Regents and based in a subunit within the universities. The SSC and LSU projects had each evolved a model of services that involved a *boundary-crossing* role for selected teachers from the public schools who served as group leaders or inservice presenters. This model proved particularly effective in: (a) expanding the ability of the project to provide services beyond what could be handled by the few full-time project staff, (b) lending credibility to inservice activities (particularly in the LSU project), and (c) enhancing support for the project within the school district as these school staff became advocates and encouraged participation. Although school staff who served as instructors or group leaders were paid a small stipend for their time, this role was most effective when it was perceived as having a special status and when a comradery developed within the group of boundary-crossers and the project staff. In addition, the LSU project was able to utilize inservice funds from the Department of Education by having district hosts request funds through the Commonwealth Inservice Institute (a unit within the Department of Education) to pay inservice presenters who were school staff working under the auspices of the project.

The Relative Value of the Activity and Incentives to Participate

A careful examination of the cases revealed that the degree of participation of teachers in inservice activities could be traced to the sensitivity of project directors and staff to how school teachers conceive of their time and incentives for participation in inservice activities. Project directors at SSC and LSU were sensitive to the need to include teachers in an initial planning meeting and to verify interest, integrate workshops into ongoing school-based inservice programs, and offer stipends for participation after school or during summer sessions. In addition, at LSU, the opportunity was available for graduate credit for participation in activities offered over a number of weeks which proved to be somewhat of an incentive or at least a symbolic recognition of the value of the experience.

In contrast, inservice sessions attempted at LCC regarding instruction to gifted and talented students were initially unsuccessful for a number of reasons. Beyond not offering stipends to teachers for attending one to three session workshops scheduled in the evenings and on Saturdays, the sessions themselves were not based on any particular ideology or recognized need expressed by school staff. Further, only a handful of school staff spread over a two-county area was concerned with talented or gifted children as an explicit part of their job. Evening workshops for parents, that were judged successful due to strong attendance, tended to focus on the identification of talented and gifted children and advocacy in getting more services through the public schools.

Other activities for students at SSC, including: (a) the expansion of an already successful enrichment program to a group of districts located over 70 miles from the campus, (b) special college credit course offerings at two high schools for seniors, and (c) campus-based summer institutes in the arts, floundered due to a lack of student

interest and were dropped without strong objections by the participating school districts. Here, the schools minimized loss of their autonomy by agreeing to make available, on an add-on basis, activities for students that did not require a modification of the high school program or structure. But, it must be remembered that the students seen as appropriate for these activities were already involved with more rigorous "college prep" courses, sports, clubs, and part-time jobs. It would seem that the students did not value these add-on activities enough to build them into their already busy schedules. School district staff who were in the role to facilitate referrals of participants were candid about the difficulty they had convincing some students of the worth of an "add-on" activity hosted through a nonprestigious university that did not offer apparent status with peers or a "plus" on an application to college. Absent from any discussions between the project director and school staff was consideration of incorporating these activities into the ongoing school structure.

The Experience and Commitment of the Project Director

Another factor that facilitated the success of activities was the manner in which the project directors from the higher educational institutions were able to plan activities funded through the Regents initiative. The project directors from LSU and SSC had been providing services to the area school districts for a number of years prior to the first RFP from the Regents. As a result, school superintendents or coordinators were aware of ongoing activities involving students or teachers from neighboring districts at these two higher education institutions. Thus, project directors at SSC and LSU were able to quickly and easily respond with proposals to continue and expand activities that had been either received positively in the past or at least discussed with area school people. In contrast, at LCC, a central administrator crafted a proposal that

was of interest to him and his wife and made individual contacts with superintendents to assess their interest should funding be obtained from the Regents. The actual planning of activities occurred once funding was allocated to the campus account, with the districts being placed in the position of reacting to a model of services developed by the project staff hired by LCC with project funds. Here, the project staff felt pressed to develop and offer activities quickly to generate enrollments that would justify future funding from the Regents.

Project directors at LSU and SSC had to be particularly careful that their project activities involving courses or inservice activities for teachers did not offend or step into the domain of other departments at the university. The project director at LSU spoke of "doing his homework" with faculty from the English department before proposing a summer institute offering course credit to the graduate council to make sure it was not perceived as overlapping with the writing courses already offered. Attempts to develop courses that would be sponsored by the division of continuing studies on either a credit or non-credit basis, and offered by project staff at SSC, were successfully opposed by the education faculty on ideological and bureaucratic grounds. In contrast, the after-school enrichment activities offered to school-age students at SSC and LCC were accepted as marginal activities on campus, as long as they were supported by outside funds and did not impinge on the core activities of either the campus or the public schools.

The project directors all expressed a very strong commitment to providing services to teachers or students from the public schools, and believed in the need for the activities offered through their particular project. In addition, the project directors held positions that were recognized and accepted as including the provision of services

to area schools. The project director as LSU was a professional staff person assigned to a unit dedicated to inservice for teachers. At SSC, the project director held a a tenured faculty position that historically carried a reduced teaching load to enable him to carry-out responsibilities related to the project. The project director at LCC was hired with projects funds specifically to develop activities for talented and gifted students.

In summary, a number of patterns in project design, context, and management appeared to contribute to the overall success of project activities and services as measured in terms of maintenance of overall participation and satisfaction by students and teachers. These included: (1) the interest and commitment of district-based staff who served as activity hosts, facilitators, and the providers of services under the auspices of the project; (2) the relative value of the activity to the individual participant and the incentives for participation; and (3) the experience and commitment of the project director.

Development and Maintenance of Interorganizational Arrangements

It cannot be over-emphasized that the three school-college collaborative projects that served as case study sites were *voluntary* arrangements between organizations that were themselves varied and complex. Each university or college is organized into various schools, divisions, or departments, which are further divided into institutes, programs, or offices. The school districts each presented some variation of the following organizational structure: central administration; community districts, some of which were subdivisions within the district (as with the Boston public schools) or across neighboring towns (as with regional school districts); elementary, intermediate, and secondary divisions, and individual school sites. The individual schools can also be thought of as being divided into departments, programs, grades and classrooms. Within

these complex structures, considerable variation existed in channels of communication and authority, styles of leadership, decision making, values, mission, and priorities.

Although the relationships may have fallen short of the ideals of *collaboration* when stated in terms of activities being jointly planned, implemented, and evaluated, they represented informal networks between campus-based project staff and school personnel from varied and complex organizations concerned with the provision of direct services to students and teachers. One of the project directors put it succinctly when he said:

> I think the collaborative programs are good, healthy, vigorous connections with the community....Sure there are holes in them...but hell, we've got enough of a network that you can see the holes in it. You go to these other schools--they don't have a network. You can't see the holes because they don't have a network.

Many features that characterized the history, context, and design of the school-college initiative, as well as the manner in which the projects were managed at the campus levels, contributed to the maintenance of the arrangements as cooperative relationships. Key features may be summarized as: (1) the lack of interest and direction from the Board of Regents; (2) the heavy reliance on funding from the Regents that remained under the control of the campuses; (3) the voluntary nature of the relationships which have to appeal to many constituencies; and (4) the choice of more marginal activities for students or teachers that could be supported through an informal network. Each of these features will be discussed below in turn.

Direction by the Regents

The Board of Regents served as the focal organization for the school-college collaborative initiative and was the main funding source for the projects. Responsibility for the development of the initial RFP and selection of funding areas,

review of funding proposals, and monitoring of project implementation was assumed by existing staff in the academic affairs unit at the Regents, in addition to their already ongoing responsibilities. Staff from the governor's Office of Educational Affairs, and budget staff from the Executive Office of Administration and Finance offered very strong recommendations regarding allowable expenditures and the formation of an advisory group. Involvement of the Department of Education was limited to a staff person who participated as a member of the advisory group due to a particular interest in one of the initial funding categories: projects for the gifted and talented. As a middle manager, she was not in the position to commit resources of the Department of Education to the effort.

Role of the state advisory group. The effect of the advisory group was largely symbolic in that it allowed the chancellor of the Regents to discuss the joint nature of the project review process in making the final funding recommendations to the legislature. The group included individuals from the Department of Education, governor's Office of Educational Affairs, Massachusetts Teachers Association, Massachusetts Superintendents Association, Harvard Graduate School of Education, as well as the project director from the Board of Regents. Many hours were spent reviewing funding recommendations made by academic affairs staff. Efforts to get the Regents to reallocate administrative resources for program monitoring, or to get information regarding the placement of equipment, were largely unsuccessful. Although it is impossible to determine how the initiative would have progressed without the advisory group, there is little evidence they had any effect on actual project operations. The major accomplishments of this group during their first two years were to: (a) bring about changes in the RFP guidelines so that more written evidence of joint planning between colleges and the schools was required, (b) get the RFP mailed to all superintendents in addition to college

and university presidents, (c) get the RFP mailed out sooner so more time was afforded colleges and schools for developing proposals, and (d) sensitize Regents staff to look for evidence of joint planning in their review of proposals. These changes served more to appease advisory group members than to change campus approaches to planning and implementation of projects.

The Regents as a host agency. A number of historic and political factors, detailed below, shaped the Regents' stance as a reluctant host agency and their influence or lack thereof, on project planning and implementation at the project level.

A governor's initiative. The school-college initiative was proposed by staff from the governor's Office of Educational Affairs and was never a priority for the Regents. As an organization, the Regents were struggling with their own initiatives as a new organization in an extremely political environment. Morale was low due to poor working conditions, lack of support staff, and recent scandals involving top administration. In fact, between 1985-86, all major players at the Regents left for other jobs outside of Massachusetts.

Lack of staff time. Academic affairs staff at the Regents were assigned the responsibility of reviewing proposals each year, in addition to their regular duties. Once this review process was completed, actual management of the initiative was left to a staff person who was designated the project director. The project director was assigned to other projects as well, and was spending much of his time seeking employment outside the state. The lack of staff time devoted to the project by the Regents influenced project directors at each site to stop preparing bimonthly progress reports and annual reports when they realized they were not being read. In the same vein, state advisory group

members dropped their expectations for information and reports regarding the project when they realized staff time was not available to complete the analyses.

Campus autonomy. Once any grant proposals are approved by academic affairs staff at the Regents, there is typically little monitoring of activities or technical assistance to the campuses. Campus staff submit periodic spending plans and reports to budget staff in fiscal affairs. This information is reviewed for fiscal, not program, accountability. Also, because funding for the school-college collaboratives was awarded to the campuses, school district staff were rarely included in decisions regarding use of project funds.

Campuses and school districts afforded little time for joint planning. The initial RFP was issued to campus presidents with instructions that proposals were due in less than one month. The short timeline for joint planning with school districts occurred because the Regents were well into the budget development process for the 1985 fiscal year when the idea for the initiative was presented by staff from the governor's office. In order to link into the budget process for the 1986 fiscal year, the RFP was issued to the campus presidents just as the first year projects were getting underway. Again, a one month turn-around time was given to the campuses in order to give Regents staff the time to review the large volume of proposals that were expected from the campuses.

Interaction patterns between the campus and participating school districts and types of services offered were already well established at the LSU and SSC sites, and did not change in response to the RFP guidelines. A tendency of the Regents to reapprove projects funded during the first year served to maintain the limited interaction patterns that occurred at LCC. Once established, the interaction patterns tended to persist as largely ceremonial demonstrations of joint planning prior to resubmission of an annual proposal to the Regents.

No requirements for reallocation or matching of Regents funding. Although it did encourage it, the RFP did not incorporate the reallocation or matching of funds by the campuses or school districts as a criterion in the review of proposals. Also, although the Regents did set funding priorities in terms of the types of students and services, it was never clarified what the initiative was intended to produce. Regents staff, advisory group members, and project staff at the campuses had varying opinions that ranged from viewing the initiative as encouraging demonstration projects in which there would be no emphasis on long-term institutionalization, to seeing it as intending to develop relationships and activities that would somehow be maintained on a longer basis.

Reliance on Funding through the Regents

The opportunity for obtaining additional monies through the Regents clearly served to stimulate staff within the universities and college to prepare funding proposals and seek endorsements for the proposed activities from area school district personnel. Campuses sought both to obtain funding for a variety of established activities as well as to initiate new activities directed toward the public schools.

At LSU and SSC, the project directors were seeking external funding to maintain or expand activities offered to students and teachers from the area public schools. The project director at LSU was motivated by a need to find financial resources to support the reinitiation of activities of project staff who had left the project when funding from another outside grant ceased. The project director at SSC saw the funding from the Regents as an opportunity to expand a self-supporting enrichment program to include additional districts in which interest had been expressed, and to add project activities that were of particular interest to him. Interestingly, these components at SSC, namely, inservice for school staff regarding gifted and talented education and a youth orchestra,

remained very dependent upon external funding. The project director and school superintendents were quite candid in their assessment that these activities were of marginal importance to the operation of the school district and, therefore, enough revenue to continue these activities could not be obtained through fees paid by the districts or student participants.

In the same vein, the development of the program at LCC was stimulated by the opportunity for external funding through the Regents. In this case, it was the personal interest of an administrator in services for the gifted and talented that led him to write the proposal and seek endorsements from the area school superintendents. As with the other cases, the LCC project clearly did not address any direct need of the campus other than enhancing a perception of providing services to the community.

Funding as an incentive to form linkages. It was the eventual availability of funding from the Regents for services and activities that led project directors to seek or maintain contact with school district staff, students, and, in one case, parents in order to stimulate involvement of participants. Further, the awareness of the availability of services and activities through the universities and college resulted in school staff or parents approaching the project director for access to services to meet a perceived need of a particular type of student or a curricular need within their classroom, program area, or building. Within the LCC and SSC sites, there is evidence that superintendents or school staff were induced to go along with participation when approached by a third party who might be a colleague or a parent. In these instances, it was easier to "go along" and participate in the referral of students because program services were provided free or at a very minimal cost to the district. Also, school staff could avoid publicly stating that they, or their district, did not support activities for students who

were perceived as gifted or talented or did not consider the program area to be a particular need in their district.

Control over funds. The control of funds received from the Regents remained clearly in the hands of the campuses and project directors. Funds requested as part of the proposal frequently exceeded final allocations by the Regents. Across all sites, decisions regarding which project objectives and activities were to be cut were made by the project director. At SSC, the project director presented expenditure reports to the superintendents governing board, primarily because project activities were funded by a combination of local tuition monies and funds from the Regents. There is some evidence that project directors at LSU and SSC had to negotiate more with the campus administrators regarding the reallocation of grant funds to other campus projects that had been proposed to the Regents in response to the RFP.

Project funds from the Regents tended to be used at all sites as token contributions for the purchase of overtime for janitorial staff, laboratory monitors, or secretarial support made available to the unit housing the project. In addition, faculty or staff from the campus were paid with project funds for their participation as instructors. At SSC, project funds were used to pay someone to assume teaching responsibilities that would have otherwise been handled by the project director.

The Appeal of Voluntary Relationships

As voluntary arrangements between a campus and a number of school districts, it was necessary for the projects to appeal to many constituencies: the campus and school administrators, the individuals who worked for token amounts as presenters or group leaders, and the participants. The nature of the appeal differed for each of these constituencies as follows.

Administrators. The basic appeal of the projects to the campus and school administrators was that the *formal* benefits of the activities could be achieved without significant expenditures of money or reassignment of staff, without scheduling problems, without loss of organizational autonomy, and without the need for elaborate administrative support.

Staff. The appeal for project staff, presenters, and group leaders is of particular interest because the success of the project activities depended upon their commitment, effectiveness, and continuity. Interestingly, in many instances, these individuals were teachers from the area public schools who "crossed over" to affiliate with a college- or university-based project which validated their expertise and allowed them to associate with other "dedicated" teachers.

Participants. Finally, the bottom line was that project activities had to appeal to participants--either students or teachers. Ironically, the greatest resource exchange was between the project (largely funded by the Regents) and the participant (and his/her parents, if the participant was a student). Since many of the activities were scheduled outside of the school day and in the summer, the participant, whether a student or a teacher, gave up his or her own time to engage in project activities and interact with peers on a college campus--and sometimes traveled great distances to do so. In appealing to the participants, then, the activities had to be different from the usual fare offered in the classroom or by higher education faculty. For students, the appeal was that assignments, grades, and therefore credits were absent; for teachers, it was that the knowledge was practitioner based--not theory. The LSU case was unique because its strength in networking "teacher to teacher" grew out of the turmoil of the Boston public

schools. The project activities might have had less appeal with teachers if they had been perceived as originating with whoever was working in the central administrative office.

The Need for an Informal Network

As previously discussed, the growth and maintenance of the voluntary relationships remained dependent upon the receipt of external funding and the referral of students and teachers as participants in activities. These needs led to two informal types of networking responses at each project site, the formation of coordinating boards and the emergence of a differentiated network of school staff.

The formation of coordinating boards. Each of the projects discussed a governing board, advisory group, or steering committee whose membership would be drawn from the school districts as part of the funding proposals submitted to the Regents. The formation of such a group, their letters of support attached to the funding proposals, and their ongoing activities could, at best, be characterized as ceremonial. The existence of these groups was clearly intended to lend credibility to the projects as being joint efforts between the campus and the area school districts. With the exception of a small group of activist superintendents who originally initiated the SSC project, the groups rarely met; when they did, minutes were rarely kept. In fact, the design of the project activities and their dependence on funding from the Regents assured the maintenance of organizational autonomy and minimized the need for discussion or compromise.

The small group of superintendents affiliated with the SSC project, who remained active as board members, stand in contrast to many of their area colleagues and to the superintendents who joined the project when funding was received from the Regents. This small group clearly considered the original SSC project theirs--they had voluntarily brought the idea to the university for joint development. Although their

early history had included many joint planning sessions with university staff, most of their colleagues had delegated their role on the governing board to the district staff person who became responsible for the selection of student participants.

The emergence of a differentiated network of school staff. What did emerge at each project was a network of district staff who were needed to host a project activity in their school district or building, make students and teachers aware of campus-based activities, and serve as instructors or leaders for activities that were appealing to participants.

At the most basic level, *ad hoc* relationships were formed between campus-based project staff and school staff in order to plan district-based inservice activities. These relationships then dissolved when the activities were provided.

However, the more ongoing, campus-based, activities necessitated an enduring relationship with district staff who facilitated the referral of teachers and students. At each project, a particular set of procedures and policies regarding the selection of participants was developed to integrate and maintain adequate numbers of participants. A lack of adequate numbers of participants from a particular district led to some attempts at adaptation, but in most instances a district easily withdrew from participation because such little investment of resources had occurred in the first place.

Finally, the need of each project to appeal to students and teachers, and to offer more activities than could be handled by project staff, resulted in the growth of a boundary-crossing role. School staff became affiliated with the project and were paid only token amounts of money to be providers of service.

Summary

This cross-case analysis was based on three case studies of voluntary

interorganizational arrangements between a public college or university and a number of school districts. The projects were hosted by the college or university and received major funding from the Board of Regents of Higher Education in Massachusetts. In general, although these arrangements delivered activities and services that were perceived as successful by participating organizations, the interorganizational arrangements fell short of the ideals of collaboration that have recently been articulated by educational reformers and that appeared each year in the RFP issued by the Regents.

The activities and services offered through each project were illustrative of a service provider-client relationship that developed between the campus and participating school districts. The four major types of activities included: (1) direct services to students, (2) improvement of school practices through training for teachers, (3) publication of newsletters, and (4) consultation/technical assistance to service providers in the schools. These activities and services were found to involve limited direct intervention in the schools and their design minimized risk, exposure, or additional responsibility for college or district personnel. They were rarely coordinated or consolidated to promote school-wide change or even district-wide impact.

The success of the projects was largely defined in terms of the number of students or teachers who enrolled in an activity or service, and their satisfaction with the experience. Data from the case studies demonstrated that neither the process of collaboration, nor more long-term outcomes related to the effectiveness of the projects in promoting school improvement, were stressed by the Regents or the participating organizations.

In looking at patterns in project design, context, and management, three factors were found to contribute most to the perceived success of project activities: (1) the interest

and commitment of district-based staff, (2) the relative value of the activity to students or teachers and incentives to participate, and (3) the experience and commitment of the project director.

Finally, the arrangements that evolved between campuses and school districts could, at best, be characterized as cooperative, but non-egalitarian, with the higher education organizations serving in the dominant, focal role. Features of the relationships that contributed to their characterization as cooperative arrangements included: (1) the lack of interest and direction from the Regents, (2) a heavy reliance on funding from the Regents that remained under the control of the campuses, (3) the voluntary nature of the relationships having to appeal to many constituencies, and (4) the choice of activities for students and teachers that could be supported by an informal network of school staff.

Conclusions and Implications

The three case studies have produced one picture of what happens when a state higher education agency seeks to promote voluntary lateral relationships among public schools and a public college or university that are intended to strengthen educational programs at the local school level. The preceding section synthesized the findings across cases, presented the overall patterns of activities and outcomes, and developed more general explanations of why these interorganizational arrangements were found to be cooperative, but non-egalitarian, with the higher education organizations serving in the dominant, focal role.

It is tempting to draw upon the interorganizational literature regarding education, with its emphasis on a goal-based, rational view of organizing (Baker, 1986) in order to make recommendations that would recast the school-college initiative as a more collaborative venture. Such a view would lead one to consider the following policy implications.

First, third-party organizations (e.g., state departments of education or higher education) must recognize the potential effect their actions have on the productivity of interorganizational arrangements at the local level. Third-party organizations can facilitate the development of cooperative arrangements by issuing clear mandates regarding the investment of resources by participating organizations, the purpose of the initiative, and the types of joint planning and governance that must occur (e.g., the assessment of needs, design of services, service operations, and the evaluation of outcomes). Whatever the objectives of a third-party organization, however, the pertinent policies must be carefully crafted prior to their initial implementation and installed for a sufficient period of time so that joint planning can occur between

participant organizations (Yin and Gwaltney, 1981). In particular, the incremental specification of requirements and their drastic revision from one year to the next should be discouraged. Interorganizational arrangements between organizations that have had little joint involvement in the past cannot be formed or broken on such a rapid basis.

Second, third-party organizations must recognize that pressuring the participant organizations to produce a large number of activities or large enrollments as the primary measures of success may inhibit the development of strong staff to staff relationships across organizational boundaries. The cases demonstrated that the reliance on these measures of success led to a quick routinization of the relationship as a referral network in order to generate sufficient numbers of participants to warrant continued funding. This "pressure to produce" was particularly difficult for projects such as the talented and gifted program at LCC, that could not build upon an existing network of school staff or parents concerned with the talented or gifted student.

Third, if joint planning and implementation of projects is an objective, it should be sanctioned through the awarding of small planning grants. At a minimum, grantees should be permitted to add a planning phase to their program objectives and activities. Colleges or universities attempting to work collaboratively with school districts for the first time, or in a program area where no existing network of concerned staff exists, cannot be expected to generate jointly conceived proposals. Since the rate of return in terms of resource contributions by participant organizations may be greater when interested staff are afforded the time to meet and discuss common concerns, it should be recognized as a fundable activity.

Fourth, interorganizational arrangements between school districts and a college or university will be promoted if external resources are provided by third-party

organizations. User fees paid by school districts, alone, are not sufficient to support services and activities. In general, such fees are likely to be an unsound basis for financing activities that are defined as successful in terms of the numbers of participants and their satisfaction with the experience. Since these measures of success have only an indirect relationship to school improvement, districts are unlikely to pay such fees in comparison to other district priorities, especially if the activities are tangential to ongoing school activities.

Fifth, cooperation will be enhanced and will have a better chance of enduring if participant organizations are able to derive mutual benefits or exchanges from the services. Activities that bear little relationship to the core activities of the participant organizations will have a difficult time surviving once external funding is withdrawn.

Sixth, third-party and participant organizations must recognize that barriers to cooperative arrangements cannot always be overcome--even with the provision of external resources. The role of geography, the value of the activity to participants, and the presence or absence of past relationships should all figure into the decision to fund or participate in a cooperative endeavor. Although the particular mission of the college or university may include serving a particular geographic region or the whole state, the cases all demonstrated that these other contextual variables limited participation by certain school districts.

Surely, the successful development and maintenance of interorganizational relationships would be enhanced if any of the above policy implications were considered and acted upon. But, more recent views of organizational behavior offer a different perspective when considering the design of interorganizational arrangements. Meyer, Scott, and Deal (1981) have found that organizational structure does not always control

activity. Cohen and March (1974) have pointed out that planning rarely shapes the future in organizations, while March and Olsen (1976) have shown that meetings frequently fail to lead to decisions or the solving of problems.

Another interpretation, then, looks not to the rational systems view for understanding interorganizational relationships, but to the inevitability of organizational anarchy in which interorganizational structuring is viewed in terms of the concept of loosely coupled systems. This concept allows the observer to see and accept behavior as being loosely coupled to intentions; actions in one part of the organization as being loosely coupled to actions in another part; decisions of today as being loosely coupled to decisions of tomorrow (Cohen and March, 1974; Weick, 1976).

Such loose coupling does not appear to be avoidable according to March (1981),

> Limits on coordination, attention, and control are inherent restrictions on the implementation of rationality in organizational action (p. 574).

Design decisions by leaders are, therefore, considered as only one factor entering into the success of interorganizational endeavors.

Is interorganizational structuring illuminated by the concept of loosely coupled systems? Looking to the cases, one sees that the interorganizational arrangements simply became loosely coupled arrangements of loosely coupled organizations; connections were usually tenuous and easily disrupted; the core activity of the interorganizational arrangement rarely became the core activity of the participating organizations considered singly.

Within each of the cases, the strength of the interorganizational network could be traced to the interpersonal linkages that were established to both facilitate the referral of participants, and expand the capacity of project to provide services through the use of

school staff as presenters and group leaders. In other words, it was the strength of these more interpersonal ties, rather than any formal agreements between participant organizations that enhanced project success.

Perhaps the school-college collaborative initiative has served a purpose that is clearly and distinctly unrelated to more instrumental performance outcomes that are considered when analyzing interorganizational relationships from a rational, more bureaucratic perspective. The projects may have served more as symbols of aspirations and accomplishments related to colleges and schools working together for school improvement, while allowing the organizations to protect their more core activities. Louis and Corwin (1984) found that it was sometimes easier for a state educational agency to perform rituals that seemed to meet new demands regarding school improvement, than to change the structure and function of the organization in order to do them.

The following implications that may be extrapolated from the above interpretation:

First, voluntary interorganizational networks between educational organizations that are themselves complex will continue to be inherently fragile. They probably will not persist for long periods of time without either longer-term funding or other forms of external pressure or support.

Second, service-providing organizations should attempt to recruit new staff working under the auspices of the project from the clientele organizations that they serve. These boundary-crossing staff will serve to strengthen the interpersonal network on which the relationship is based.

Third, participant organizations should encourage interpersonal and interorganizational communication. Interpersonal networks were found in each of the

cases to have been initiated by proactive individuals who created a new role space around themselves. Further, each of the project directors was motivated to locate and interact with individuals whose interests were moving in the same direction as theirs. Once the project was established, a selective interdependent set of individuals became concerned with the continuation of the project, quite apart from the participant organizations.

Fourth, transitions will be difficult. Shifting from one basis of financial support to another will probably be difficult for a project because the underlying assumptions about resource exchanges between the participating organizations are radically altered.

Finally, institutionalization should not be expected. It may not even be desirable given the mutability of the context. What appears to be an ideal arrangement at one point in time, may be a burden in the future (Louis and Rosenblum, 1981).

Summary

The above discussion presents two different ways to interpret the case materials presented in this paper. The rational, bureaucratic perspective of interorganizational behavior is based on the view that the exchange of resources between organizations will allow for more efficient use of scarce resources in the delivery of services than is possible through autonomous action. In contrast, viewing educational organizations as loosely coupled systems emphasizes the uncertainty and ambiguity that exists in these settings. These approaches are quite different, and clearly point to different management and policy implications. The latter view of organizations is in current vogue with organizational theorists (Louis and Rosenblum, 1981). Politically, it is more consistent with preferences of both colleges or universities and public school districts for local autonomy. However, I believe one should also consider the implications of the more rational, bureaucratic approach to looking at interorganizational behavior, which

stresses the value of organizing, and the belief that while human systems should not be held up to standards of perfection, they can be improved.

In my view, the cases do not permit a conclusive choice of the most appropriate perspective. They do suggest the need for more discussion to clarify the values and assumptions that underlie the development of state sponsored initiatives to promote voluntary interorganizational arrangements as a vehicle for school improvement.

Appendix A

Method

A multiple-case study approach was used for examining interorganizational relationships between a college or university and a group of school districts. Each of the three projects (the Talented and Gifted Program at Local Community College, Projects for High Learning Potential at Small State College, and The Comprehensive Writing Center at the Large State University) and the Board of Regents was treated as a "case" and a common analytic framework was used to seek out answers to the principal research questions. The brunt of the data collection effort went into getting in-depth, contextually grounded accounts of, (1) how the interorganizational arrangements worked, and (2) why the arrangements worked the way they did. The general research strategy called for multiple interviewing at each site, the collection of documentary evidence, and non-participant observation.

Case Study Site Selection

Of the 71 school-college collaborative projects that formed the universe of projects funded through the Massachusetts Board of Regents in 1985-86, the three projects selected for the study had to satisfy several criteria. First, they all had to provide services to local school districts (LEAs), although the types of services or participants could vary. The essential condition was that a college or university was involved in an interorganizational arrangement with a group of LEAs. Second, each of the sites selected would represent the involvement of a *different* segment of higher education (e.g., a community college, state college, and university). Third, the projects had to represent well-developed cases of interorganizational arrangements designed to improve the quality of education in Massachusetts public schools. Five factors were considered when characterizing a project as well-developed:

1. The project must have been ongoing for at least one year with the expectation that it would continue through 1986-87;

2. Services must have been conducted frequently or with enough intensity that at least several public school staff or students and higher education personnel were involved;

3. Evidence of resource commitment by the participating organizations had to be present--i.e., evidence of involvement of higher ranking personnel or commitment of financial resources;

4. The services or goods provided must have produced some evidence of positive effects that were documented through evaluation activities;

5. Evidence of documentation regarding the project, including funding proposals, progress reports, evaluation reports, and correspondence between participating organizations had to be present.

The above criteria served as the basis for the development of a list of potential sites. Several steps were followed in developing the list. First, project documents on file at the Board of Regents were reviewed for thoroughness, frequency and duration of project services, evidence of service provision to LEAs, evidence of resource commitment by participating organizations, and evidence of positive effects. Second, project directors were then asked if the interorganizational arrangement might be studied. A preliminary visit was made to each site to review the resource commitment of the participating organizations with the project director and to assess the availability of written materials regarding the project that were not on file at the Board of Regents.

The three case study sites selected were not intended to be representative of the 71 projects that were receiving funding from the Board of Regents. The selection of well-developed, rather than representative, sites was the foremost consideration in order to permit the full documentation of how and why the interorganizational arrangements operated as they did. Initial discussions with staff at the Regents, and a

review of project documents on file, indicated the number of projects fitting all selection criteria would not be large.

The Talented and Gifted Program (TAG) at Local Community College (LCC) was chosen for several reasons. It represented an interorganizational arrangement between a community college and a large number of primarily small, rural school districts that were widely dispersed over a two-county area. The program's origins coincided with the birth of the school-college funding initiative at the Regents and it was expected to continue during 1986-87. Services for talented and gifted students, parents, and area school staff were scheduled to occur throughout the calendar year. The design of the program called for involvement of college faculty and public school staff in planning and implementation of activities. Statements of positive evaluation results appeared in program reports and an annual evaluation conducted by the Board of Regents.

The Comprehensive Writing Center at the Large State University (LSU) was selected because it met all the basic criteria. The project represented an arrangement that was both physically and institutionally part of a university. It was designed to offer teacher inservice activities and technical assistance to the Boston public schools and a mix of other urban and suburban districts in the Greater Boston area. Activities were scheduled throughout the schoolyear and during the summer months at LSU. The writing project predated the school-college initiative by a number of years and had been able to achieve a measure of stability due to the receipt of funding from the Regents. There was evidence that various program evaluation methods had been employed over the years.

The third site, Projects for High Learning Potential (PHLP) at Small State College (SSC), was chosen because it presented a unique opportunity to study an interorganizational arrangement that had originally been developed in 1980 when a group of area school superintendents had approached SSC regarding services for gifted

and talented high school students. SSC has a small campus and tends to draw students mainly from one region of Massachusetts. PHLP represented one of the few arrangements that also relied on direct financial resources from participating school districts or students in the form of tuition. Receipt of funding from the Regents had allowed expansion in two ways: the scope of services offered to gifted and talented students and school staff became larger; and the number, types, and geographic dispersion of school districts involved increased. Outside consultants were routinely hired to conduct evaluation activities and produce formal reports.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred between the early spring and fall of 1986 and included four major steps. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with the project directors at each site and the Board of Regents. Also, lists of names, addresses, and phone numbers of college or university and LEA staff were obtained. Second, retrospective interviewing of informants was done at each site and via telephone. An effort was made to include interviews with staff from LEAs with both high and low rates of participation, marginal actors, avowed critics of the arrangements, and those who were involved in planning or evaluation of activities related to the projects. All respondents were assured confidentiality and any names that appear in the case studies have been changed.

A breakdown of interviews by site and role was as follows:

Role	Regents	LCC	SSC	LSU
Higher educ. admin./staff:	6	3	0	3
Project dir./staff:	1	2	5	3
Superintendents:	-	8	8	0
School staff:	-	11	16	3
Advisory group:	5	-	-	2
Participants (teachers):	-	0	0	13
Evaluator:	1	-	1	-
Other:	0	4	1	1
Totals:	13	28	31	25

Third, a wide range of documents was collected and analyzed. Most were generated at the sites themselves: funding proposals, program announcements, evaluation reports; memoranda, minutes of meetings and other official records of programmatic activities; examples of materials being disseminated or used by LEA personnel and students; budgets, logs, and other tabulations of services provided; correspondence between members of the arrangement. Other summaries of historic events and activities at each site and analyses of school-college collaborative annual budget requests were prepared by piecing together information gleaned from various documents and interview notes.

Fourth, on-site observations were carried out. Between three and five days were spent at each site in observation of training events, student activities, key meetings, and routine operations.

Adequacy of the Data Base

Overall, data were consistent and reasonably exhaustive at LCC, SSC, and the Regents. As interviewing progressed at these sites, information became redundant and contained no discrepancies from previous accounts.

The LSU site was harder to encompass. Data were thin on the district administrators

in the Boston public schools (BPS) due to the high turnover of top staff over the last 10 years. Only one district administrator was interviewed rather briefly, and she tended to offer little information. Because accounts about these administrators from other role informants were very consistent, less energy was put into reaching administrators in the BPS.

TABLE 2.4 SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDY SITES

	FY 1985	FY 1986	FY 1987
TAG PROGRAM/ LCC			
Total Request for Campus	$343,061 / 3 projects	$116,967 / 1 project	$170,216 / 3 projects
Regents Recommendation	$105,705 / 1 project	$80,000 / 1 project	$85,000 / 1 project
Request for TAG Program	$107,705	$116,967	$105,001
Regents Recommendation	$105,705	$80,000	$85,000
PHLP/SSC			
Total Request for Campus	$1,323,200/ 6 projects	$569,275 / 3 projects	$315,275 / 2 project
Regents Recommendation	$201,016 / 2 projects	$231,000 / 2 projects	$255,275 / 2 projects
Request for PHLP	$128,808	$195,275	$195,275
Regents Recommendation	$128,808	$148,500	$155,275
WRITING CENTER/ LSU -- BOSTON			
Total Request for Campus	$3,585,702/25 projects	$1,095,577 / 7 projects	$556,474 / 3 projects
Regents Recommendation	$424,428 / 6 projects	$490,000 / 5 projects	$500,950 / 3 projects
Request for Comprehensive Writing Center	$178,000	$204,862	$196,250 (a)
Regents Recommendation	$178,000	$125,000	$99,200 (a)

(a) Writing Center was merged with another inservice project under an "umbrella project" in the inservice funding area for FY 1987. On-campus, a total of $126,250 was requested for the Writing Center, and $70,000 was allocated (totals are estimates due to co-mingling of budget requests for consultant and administrative expenses).

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Promoting Voluntary Interorganizational Arrangements
Individual Case Profiles

	Large State University Comprehensive Writing Center	Small State College Projects for High Learning Potential	Local Community College Talented & Gifted Program
Year initiated:	1979	1980	1985
Goals:	Improve teaching of writing in the public schools.	Provide campus-based after school enrichment program for juniors and seniors.	Provide campus-based enrichment program for gifted & talented early elem. children; bring positive attention to the college.
Governance:	Steering committee of school staff (inactive).	Three superintendents' boards (attended primarily by designees).	Advisory group of school staff/parents (inactive).
Administration:	Institute for Learning & Teaching; supervised by 1 univ. staff and 2 school staff.	Political science department; faculty serving as director; project hired coordinator and 3 staff assistants.	Continuing education with project funded coordinator.
Major Activities:	Summer institutes; teacher stipends; inservice programs; multicultural writing prog.; curriculum dev.; bimonthly newsletter.	Weekly enrichment activities; mentorships; newsletters; youth orchestra; inservice and demonstration lessons for teachers; math-science satellite program.	Child workshops; chamber music ensemble; special events; parent workshops.
Budget:			
FY 1985	$178,000	$128,808	$105,705
FY 1986	$125,000	$148,500	$80,000
FY 1987	$99,200	$155,275	$85,000
College/Univ. contribution:	Facilities (project covered office expenses); one school staff position; credit for institute activities.	Facilities (project covered office expenses and part of director's salary).	Facilities (office expenses & janitorial covered by project).
School district contribution:	Assist in planning inservice; facilities; referral of colleagues; teachers hired by project as trainers; one staff position.	Tuition for student and teacher participants; transportation; referral of students; project paid teachers as instructors.	Referral of students; parents provide transportation; project hired teachers as instructors.
Evaluation:	Participation rates & meas. of teacher satisfaction.	Participation rates & meas. of student satisfaction; follow-up of graduates.	Participation rates & meas. of parent satisfaction.